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CS 172.01: Introduction to Computer Modeling

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CS 172: Computer Modeling

Syllabus

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Instructor: [Nora McDougall](#)

Scheduled Classes: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 2:00 - 3:00 in SS 344

Scheduled labs: Tuesday 2:00 - 3:30 in FA210 (this lab is optional)

Office: CH346 - on the 3rd floor of Corbin Hall

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 10:00 - 11:00 am. Thursday 2:00 - 3:00 Of course other times can be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

Personal Email: nmconex@bigsky.net (I don't mind at all if you send me questions, etc to this address, but if you send homework, it will be deleted. There is an address given below for homework.)

Home Phone: 406.543.1452 (Might be answered by my daughter. She's **fairly** good at taking messages.)

TA: To be announced

Course Description (in Nora's words)

The purpose of this class is to teach you how to use the basic office software packages to analyze data so you can make management-level decisions. The reason it's called "Computer Modeling" is that you will use the software to show (model) information about real life scenarios. In this class the "real-life" won't be real organizations, but the assignments and activities in this class will be "models" of what happens in real organizations.

The main topics covered will be using spreadsheets with Microsoft Excel and using relational database is Microsoft Access. There will also be a three week review of hardware, software and word processing.

Each student will be asked to create a 5-member business, non-profit, or agency related to your major. (If you can use this project to complement or help assignments in other classes; so much the better!) All assignments and exam questions will relate to your modeled organization. Each assignment is part of a larger project, so not completing one assignment will affect the completion of other assignments. More about this on the Assignment Overview page.

Class Announcements: I will try to post all announcements as a message window when this page loads

Prerequisites

From the catalog: "Prereq., previous computer experience and Math 100 or equiv. score on math placement test, or consent of instr."

Plain English version: To be successful in this class, you will need to begin with **basic computer skills**, including how to use Windows, how to save and retrieve files, how to create, send and manage emails, etc. and **basic math and algebra skills**, especially related to creating formulas. If you do not have these skills, it would be in your best interest to build those skills first and take this course later. That will avoid a great deal of frustration and possibly save your grade average! I will be delighted to help you with the material covered by this class, but in order to adequately take care of all the students, I can't devote time to teaching the prerequisite skills.

Texts - *I understand these books will be available at the UM Bookstore; at Barnes & Noble; and on amazon.com.*

New Perspective Series Microsoft Excel 2000 by June Jamrich Parsons, Dan Oja, Roy Ageloff and Patrick Carey
Published by Course Technology: a division of Thompson Learning; 2000 ISBN: 0-7600-7086-5

New Perspectives Series Access 2000 by Adamski, Hommel and Finnegan
Published by Thompson Learning Course Technology ISBN: 0-7600-7089-X

Grading

You will be graded on homework and tests.

There will be two mid-terms(one covering Spreadsheets and one covering Database) and a final.

There will be approximately 10 homework assignments.

If you would like to take this class as Pass/Not Pass, a C or above is considered passing.

Tests: Exam 1 - 12.5%, Exam 2 - 12.5%, Final - 25%

Homework: 50%

90-100%: A

80-89%: B

70-79: C

60-69: D

Below 60: F

For CS majors, department policy says that you cannot receive credit for D letter grade.

Tests

The purpose of this course is to prepare you for your professional life. I believe that tests should be part of the learning process, not a way to find some obscure item to trip you up. As much as possible, tests will duplicate real life professional situations and information. Tests are only 50% of your grade because most of us don't get paid in the real world for taking tests, but for producing work.

In real life, you will hopefully have a shelf full of computer reference materials. The key is having enough knowledge and experience to use those materials efficiently. Tests will be open-book, open notes, but no Internet or other outside information. There will be no make-up tests given, unless you are in the hospital or jail or your transmission goes out of your car while you are out of state! In any of these cases, I will need to see some sort of proof of the situation.

You will be given all the possible questions that could appear on the tests approximately one week ahead of time. If you can't figure out any of the questions, see me and I'll review it with you. All I care about is whether you learn the material, not whether I can trip you up on a test. However, tests will not necessarily be easy and will involve your ability to communicate about your computer skills. Tests will involve your own scenario; so you are welcome to bring printouts of your homework layout (no formula prints). This also means that if you don't do your homework, you may have some difficulty finishing the tests in the allowed time.

Homework

There will be approximately 10 homework assignments. The first three will review the topics of using email, basic computer skills, and word processing. The rest will be divided between spreadsheets and database. Besides the verbal explanations given in class, most of the assignments will be posted on this web site and linked from the chart at the bottom of the page. There will also be pages with tips and extra instructions.

The skills covered in this course will be presented in class. However, if this information is completely new to you, you will greatly benefit from the personal help available during the optional lab time. I also recommend that you form study groups to help each other. Anyone who has enough personal experience with the material covered to lead a small group will be allowed to trade time for an assignment. You will learn as much from helping someone as from doing the assignment. Please contact me if you are interested in further details.

All of your homework assignments will revolve around one semester-long information management project that you will be creating. Every assignment will add to that project, and your tests will also be related to the project. The project will be to set up a partial budget and contact database for a business, non-profit organization or agency you create.

Time needed to complete assignments: expect to spend 3-6 hours/week on homework assignments, depending on your own rate of learning computer skills. If you are already familiar with Excel and Access, you will have a time advantage. Most of the assignments will require creativity and/or research. Gathering information is actually half the process of producing reports for analysis. We will be "modeling" this aspect, as well.

All assignments are to be turned in electronically either by disk or by email.

If you use a disk, I recommend that you use a Zip disk or burn to a CD. As other students have had the misfortune to discover, some assignments won't fit on a floppy disk, and floppy disks are very prone to failure. I am not responsible for unreadable disks.

If you use email, please be sure your account is working. Send your assignments to cs172@thecomputergal.com. I am not responsible for email that doesn't get to me. I have set an Autoresponder on the account, so you should receive an almost immediate reply if your email goes through properly. Save both the copy of the email that you sent and the Autoresponder reply. That way if there is ever a question whether you sent an assignment, you have proof. For all assignments that you have proof of sending, I will accept late submissions without grade loss should there be a technical problem on my system.

Back everything up! In case of the multitude of problems that can (and will) happen with computers, you are required to be able to produce a copy of everything you have turned in. I will also be storing a copy of each cumulative assignment. If you have a computer failure, I will be happy to send you a copy of any assignments I have stored. This is especially important since each assignment builds on previous assignments.

Due dates will be posted with each assignment. Late assignments will be docked 10 points for each week they are late.

Extra Credit

Everyone has busy schedules and unexpected situations. There will be various extra credit opportunities during the semester. None of these will involve cramming a semester's worth of work in at the end of the semester. Extra credit will be given for extra effort during the course of the semester.

Current extra credit list

Copying/Cheating

In this class, working together and getting ideas from outside sources is not considered cheating as long as you type in your own work and and you can show that your own ideas are an integral part of your work. Please reference your sources at the bottom of your homework. If there is any question about the possibilities of cheating arise, the references to your sources and your ability to explain your own work will be your defense. If it is determined that you have cheated, you will receive a 0% grade for that test or assignment.

The penalties for cheating are listed in the Student Conduct booklet.

Incompletes

Campus policy on Incompletes can be found on this page.

Obscenity/Profanity

Please treat this course as a professional situation. I will assume that the same rules of conduct that would apply in any office or professional setting apply in this class. Please keep all profanity and obscenity out of submitted work and communication, both with me, as with your fellow students. The Computer Science Department has written obscenity/profanity rules or guidelines. If you have any questions, please check with the Computer Science office - 4th floor of the Social Sciences building.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a physical disability that will affect your performance in this class, please notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that reasonable accommadation can be made.

Please note that your instructor has a hearing loss on the right side. If there is a great deal of noise in the class, I won't be able to distinguish speech or I may not be able to tell who is speaking. I will ask that, during class time, non-essential noise be kept to a minimum. Thanks!

Schedule for Fall 2002

This schedule is digital, not "set in concrete." That means it can easily be adjusted based on the needs of this particular class.

Date	Chapters/Class	Assignment	Related Links /Comments
Sept 6	Review	Email me	<u>Assignment 1 Instructions</u>
Sept 9	Review Computer Hardware/Assignment 2		

Sept 11	Guest Speaker from First Call to discuss networking		
Sept 13	Review Computer Software/Assignment 2	Company Memo	Assignment 2 Instructions - Due Sept 13. at midnight
Sept 20	Review Word Processing and PowerPoint	Company Promo	Assignment 3 Instructions - Due Sept 20. at midnight
Sept 23	Drop Deadline 1	This the last day you can drop this course and receive a refund.	Explanation of this policy is a little way down the page.
Sept 27	Excel 1 & 2	Computer Budget	Assignment 4 Instructions - Due Monday Sept 30. at midnight
Oct 4	Excel 3 & 4	Lease Budget	Assignment 5 Instructions - Due Wednesday, Oct 9. at midnight
Oct 11	Excel 5 & 6	Pay-per-click Budget	Assignment 6 - due Friday, Oct 18 at midnight
Oct 14	Drop Deadline 2	This is the last day you can drop this course.	Explanation of this policy is a little way down the page.
Oct 18	Excel 7 & 8	Salary Budget and Budget Summary	** Extra Credit Assignment ** Must be turned in by Dec. 6
Oct 25	Review for Exam		Group presentations must be given by Oct. 25
Nov 1	Exam	Introducing Cousin Earl	Exam 1 Practice Question
Nov 8	Access 1 & 2	Setting up tables in datasheet view	Assignment 8 - due Wednesday, Nov. 13 at midnight.
Nov 15	Access 3 & 4	Changing your database in form view	Assignment 9 - due Tuesday, Nov. 26 at midnight.
Nov 22	Access 5 & 6	Setting up relationships and queries	
Dec 2	Access 7	Creating reports	Assignment 10 - Due Monday Dec. 9 at midnight. ** Last one!!! **
Dec 6	Review for exam		Exam 2 Review Questions - more coming
Dec 13	Access Exam	More Cousin Earl	No assignments will be accepted after Dec. 11
Dec 20	Finals week	Traditional, Cummulative Exam	Test Dates are: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 1 - 3 in FA210. Sign up to begin next week.
		Merry	



	Best of Luck!!!	 Christmas!!!	Happy New Year!!!
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